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DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
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TO: Minerals File

FROM: Paul Baker, Senior Reclamation Biologist

RE: Site Inspection, Miracle Rock Mining Company, Body Tody Project, S/015/040, and The Rockland Corporation, Rockland Mine, S/015/085, Emery County, Utah

Date of Inspection:	October 30, 2001
Time of Inspection:	10:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Conditions:	Partly cloudy, 50's
Participants:	Morgan Hatch, Miracle Rock Mining, and Paul Baker, DOGM

Purpose of Inspection:

Mines owned by Miracle Rock Mining Company and The Rockland Corporation are immediately adjacent to each other, and they are both being operated by Miracle Rock Mining Company. I wanted to see how the mines are being operated.

Getting to the site:

Take 300 East in Emery south for about 2.25 miles past 400 South. At this point, there is a road that veers southeast. After about 2.25 miles on this road, there are two turnoffs. Stay on the main road which continues east for about 0.25 miles where there is a road heading southeast. This is the permitted haul road and leads to the mines.

Observations:

During the inspection, a trackhoe was operating on the bench on the north side of the Miracle Rock portion of the operation. Mr. Hatch indicated they are working to face up a new portal in this area. We went up to where the trackhoe was operating, and I could not see any salvaged soil. While the soil is mostly thin in this area, there is some the operator could salvage.

The Division has on file a map from the operator showing the total disturbed area for both mines as 4.178 acres. I am not certain whether this includes the outslope area. On his previous inspection, Tony Gallegos indicated the site may be close to five acres, and I had the same impression. At the next inspection, the inspector should use a GPS unit to determine the size.

There is a small soil stockpile near the highwall mine, but the only vegetation on it is weeds.

In the middle of the highwall mine pad area is a large pile of waste material consisting mostly of sandstone, shale, and shaley coal. I am concerned about how this waste pile will be reclaimed. My experience is that very little will grow on this type of material, particularly in the arid environment of this area.

There is a small sediment trap in the ditch between the road and the pad outslope, and Mr. Hatch said most runoff from the pad flows to this small depression. Despite its size, he said it generally handles the runoff, but it has to be cleaned once or twice a year.

I did not inspect the mill site in Emery, but Mr. Hatch and I discussed the types of operations being done there. As I understood Mr. Hatch's explanation, the product is brought from the mine, crushed and screened. Some or all of this material is leached to obtain a mineral supplement, both for human consumption and to be used as a fertilizer. The remaining solid product is bagged as a soil supplement/fertilizer.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

The operator needs to be more conscientious about salvaging topsoil, even when there is very little available. I expect some portions of the site will be very difficult to reclaim, and the operator will need all available topsoil. I also recommend the operator seed the small topsoil stockpile near the highwall mine.

The next time an inspector visits this site, a GPS unit should be used to determine the size of the disturbed areas.

The Division has not yet formalized its policy concerning offsite milling operations, but when this happens, it will need to evaluate whether the mill site needs to be permitted.

jb
cc: David Taylor, Miracle Rock Corporation
Bill Ruehman, The Rockland Corporation
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Highwall Mine

Topsoil pile

Highwall Mine with waste on the left.